

should be slightly concave, and the edge turned up. Along the middle of the button are arranged perforations for the passage of the sutures, which should be sufficiently large to admit two thicknesses of the wire freely. The number of these openings will depend, of course, upon the number of the sutures, which are usually placed about 3-16ths of an inch apart."

Dr. B. claims for the button suture important advantages in the protection it affords to the denuded edges of the fistula. "It is a fact well known to surgeons," he observes, "that a simple incised wound will heal with much more rapidity when shielded from the atmosphere and all other extraneous influences, than, all other circumstances being equally favourable, when there is no such protection. Vesico-vaginal fistule, after the edges have been paired, being truly an incised wound, is subject, of course, to the same general laws. The button fulfils this indication of protection with positive certainty, if its application be properly attended to. It is true that in a deep cavity like the vagina, the opposite walls of which are nearly always in contact, the atmosphere can have little or no effect upon the affected parts. But there are other and far more obnoxious influences to shut out; and of these the urine, in cases of double fistule, is most hurtful, for, as it is not commonly the case that both openings are closed at the same operation, the one first operated on, without some protection, is continually bathed in this poisonous fluid. I say *poisonous*, for few will deny to urine such an influence upon raw surfaces, and the consequence is that failure, from this circumstance alone, oftentimes occurs. Leucorrhœal discharges are also more or less harmful, a fact of which Chelius was aware, but I do not know that any other author has made mention of it."

Dr. B. claims also for the button suture a superiority to the clamp suture of Dr. Sims in the following particulars:—

"1. It is simpler in its construction, and applicable to a greater number of cases.

"2. It affords complete protection and perfect rest to the approximated edges of the fistula.

"3. If two fistulous openings exist, one or both may be closed at the same sitting, according to the inclination of the operator or patient, without reference to the condition of the parts.

"4. The introduction of the sutures does not demand the same exactness in regard to the position of the points.

"5. The independent action of each suture renders parallelism unnecessary, and thus gives the operator the liberty of introducing them in whatever direction may best suit his purpose.

"6. If perfect coaptation be found wanting after the edges of the fistula have been brought together, it is not necessary to remove the sutures, but simply to loosen them in order to perfect the paring.

"7. The apparatus does not irritate, it matters not what the condition of the parts may be, provided they are not in a state of progressive ulceration or inflammation.

"8. The apparatus requires to remain in position seldom longer than ten days."

Experience must determine how far these claims can be sustained.

Kiesteine and the Urine of Pregnancy.—Dr. GEO. T. ELLIOTT, Jr., Physician to Bellevue Hospital, New York, gives (*New York Journ. Med.*, Sept. 1856) a good résumé of the literature of this subject, and furnishes the results of numerous experiments made by himself, to determine whether there were any recognizable peculiarities in the urine of pregnancy.

He made a tabular record, he states, of over one hundred and fifty-three cases. "In order that we should be less exposed," he observes, "to the chances of deception or error, we obtained most of the urine from women who applied at my office for a ticket, which would enable them to be attended in their labour by the district physicians of the Asylum—though we did not adopt this plan until we had satisfied ourselves that the appearances did not appear to be affected by the time of day when the urine was passed; in other words, that the '*urina sanguinis*' was not necessary to the experiment.

"The urine thus obtained was exposed at the proper temperature in shallow, wide-mouthed glass vessels, holding an ounce or more, and covered with a label referring to the number of the case in the record. A portion of each specimen was tested with heat and nitric acid—with litmus paper—often with acetic acid, as well as boiled with liquor potassæ, contained in bottles freed from lead.

"The daily changes were regularly noted until they could be almost foretold by us in many cases, and the microscope was brought to bear on every specimen many times.

"We thought, and still think, that these observations should have been made more extensively on the urine of the earliest months of pregnancy, and on the urine of lower animals; but the drudgery of the task, and the result of our researches, have not stimulated us to continue further.

"It seemed to us desirable to notice whether the microscope could reveal any 'globular' or other bodies peculiar to pregnancy, and to this part of the examination Dr. Van Arsdale gave the most faithful and unwearied attention.

"Now, while the urine collected and thus exposed, furnished us with pellicles after various intervals of time, yet did these pellicles differ greatly from each other in appearance and modes of formation. While one-sixteenth of the whole number failed to present a pellicle, still their characteristics are readily referable to certain types.

"To begin with the changes which were the most satisfactory as coinciding with those on which the value of kiesteine as a test for pregnancy reposes.

"First day. Cloud-like deposit, like very thin blue milk dropped in the urine; or, like some fuzzy cotton carefully scraped.

"Second day. Shining specks in the urine, and commencing film on the surface.

"Third day. Film forming well, cheesy odour.

"Fourth day. Film very distinct, tenacious, about a line in thickness, concave on its upper surface, 'glistening like spermaceti,' lighter in colour than the rest of the urine, which has, however, assumed an opaline hue. The white specks which preceded the formation of the pellicle, are very distinct, and adherent to the sides of the glass. Brilliant crystalline specks on the surface. Cheesy odour very distinct.

"Seventh day. This state of things has continued, and the pellicle is now beginning to break up. It commences to crack and separate, showing a darker colour through its interstices.

"The microscope displays now, as it has done some days since, myriads of vibrions and monads, disporting themselves in a dark amorphous mass studded with opaque points, and having imbedded within it, very numerous and well-formed crystals of the triple phosphate, but no globular bodies whatsoever, either in the sediment, pellicle, or intermediate strata.

"Now could such appearances be found in the urine of pregnancy, and the urine of pregnancy alone, the need of the profession would be supplied; but the proportion of such classical specimens was small, and the cheesy odour rarely present, even in specimens equally well marked.

"We have seen a pellicle resembling the foregoing description in every single particular (saving the cheesy odour) form on the urine of a healthy woman, suckling a child four months old, and which required all the milk that the well-supplied breasts of its mother could furnish.

"A female servant in the asylum had been troubled with dysmenorrhœa. She would be faint, hysterical, very troublesome to deal with, and alarming herself, and all the women around her, when her turns came on. I examined the uterus at one menstrual period, drew off her urine with the catheter, and exposed it as usual.

"Urs passed through the changes described, and presented a well-marked, thick, tenacious, fatty scum on the surface, studded with cream-coloured spots, differing in no respect from numbers of our best marked specimens. The microscope displayed the appearances described above. I know that this woman had not been pregnant for two years, and she remained under my close observation for many months subsequently, and therefore these appearances occurred in the urine of pregnancy, in the urine of uninterrupted lactation, and in the

urine of an unimpregnated female at a period of time amply remote from a previous pregnancy.

"Neither of these last two specimens gave the cheesy odour, but we soon learned that it was too infrequent to serve as a test of the urine of pregnancy.

"In three specimens from pregnant women presenting the same appearances, and undergoing similar changes, we might find the cheesy odour in one, the odour of putrescent beef in a second, and an unspeakable odour in the third.

"A very common variety of pellicle, and one that we acquired the habit of foretelling with great certainty, is apt to form on the urine of anæmic, anxious-looking women. It is generally of a pale colour, and contains a larger admixture of vaginal mucus. The changes occurring in this kind of urine are very much as follows: the specimen becomes rapidly opaline in colour, without the preceding whitish specks, twenty-four hours being, for the most part, more than sufficient for the transformation; and by that period of time the surface has assumed a glazed appearance from the presence of a film, which, as it does not differ in colour from the urine, might escape observation, unless a probe or sharp-pointed instrument were passed through it; when an even, regular, and slightly tenacious film would be detected. This would remain for variable periods, sometimes for more than a week, becoming thicker and better formed, and giving the best examples of the pellicle resembling the fatty scum of cooled mutton broth.

"Now, in this kind of urine we were able to foretell the appearance of vibriones and monads at an earlier period of time than in any other, they being visible before the crystals of the triple phosphate.

"In some of these specimens, while the change in colour just referred to, and the microscopical appearances were the same, the pellicle would resemble a thin layer of collodion, adhering tightly to the centre, and sinking with the evaporation of the liquid.

"We have not observed the monads to appear at a later period than the vibriones, as a general rule.

"Again, some specimens of urine would give the cotton-like, cloudy deposit for the first day, and by the expiration of that time, the surface would be studded with brilliant crystals of the triple phosphate, as though diamond dust had been sprinkled there.

"This urine was generally alkaline from the beginning, and when we had recognized this appearance we no longer anticipated the opaline change in colour, nor any of the pellicles that have been described.

"These points would increase in number, become agglomerated, and form a pellicle, indeed; but one dry, irregular, and pointed, which broke up, and fell to the bottom as the others did.

"Another pellicle frequently met with, was one forming rapidly, dry and dark-looking, and rugous as though it had been blown with the breath and suddenly crisped. Under the microscope, vibriones and monads would first appear.

"A gentleman visiting my office, one day, passed some water at my instance, which was exposed under the same conditions as the others. To our amusement, a pellicle, precisely resembling the last described, formed and lasted some time.

"This variety, however, while presenting the cotton-like deposit, does not present the opaque spots and bright oblong points seen in others.

"Other specimens obtained from pregnant women would present a dense, turbid deposit. The urine would deepen in colour, and, after the usual time, from two to five days, an unadherent, clotted, dirty-looking pellicle would cover about two-thirds of the surface, presenting, as usual, the vibriones, monads, and triple phosphates.

"Indeed, so far as the appearances of the pellicles went, we found no type distinctive of the urine of pregnancy; for while the urine of women, whom we knew to be pregnant, furnished us with entirely different pellicles, under exposure to the same conditions of atmospheric temperature and light, we found, even among our limited number of specimens from the urine of unimpregnated

females, and men, that pellicles would form similar to those on the urine of pregnant women.

"With regard to the microscopic appearances, we can say, that so uniform were the appearances of vibriones, monads, and triple phosphates, that we soon ceased to allude to them, otherwise, than by their initials.

"While the great proportions of our specimens were acid, we yet rarely met with crystals of uric acid. Urates of ammonia were not infrequent on the first day of exposure, and we have some cases recorded as presenting the urates of soda, and the oxalates of lime were often seen.

"We had hoped that Stark's views might bear the test of examination, and that it might be possible to observe with the microscope some appearance which should serve as a test for pregnancy.

"Nearly one hundred and sixty specimens of the urine of pregnant women have been thus examined, without the disclosure of anything peculiar to the urine of pregnancy.

"Toriæ were not unfrequently met with, and generally, without the stems, present in diabetic urine, and this led to our examination of the urine for sugar, which was done by boiling a portion with liquor potassæ, kept in bottles freed from lead.

"If this test should be considered at all reliable, the proportion of such cases was found to be large.

"While engaged in these examinations, a specimen of urine was brought by a student of medicine, Mr. Bedell, for examination. It was from a patient of his suspected of pregnancy.

"When I saw it (in the evening), it had already stood some days, and a thin, even, light-coloured pellicle had formed—lighter in colour than the subjacent urine, and commencing to crack. The urine was not albuminous; and the microscope disclosed numerous small globular bodies, perfectly circular; regular in size; whitish in colour; transparent in the centre, and opalescent on the edges; floating in the pellicle; sediment and intermediate strata; acetic, hydrochloric, sulphuric, and nitric acids did not affect them, nor were they changed by successions with ammonia, ether, and chloroform.

"In a word, they answered so fairly to the description by Stark of his 'globular bodies,' that we suspected the woman of being pregnant by all the laws of 'Gravidine.' This patient remained under the care of Mr. Bedell, who knows that she was not pregnant during all the time that she continued under his observation. And as this was the only specimen that presented appearances resembling the globules described by Dr. Stark, we have not been able to confirm his observations.

"One of our specimens of urine from men presented appearances answering pretty closely to Dr. Stark's description, but by the seventh day they had commenced to germinate.

"In short, the result of our labours but enables us to say, that we have seen nothing conclusive as to recognizable peculiarities in the urine of pregnancy. We think that there is nothing positive in its indications, and that its appearances can scarcely even be called 'corroborative.'

"We reached this conclusion slowly, yet without regret; for we had no preconceived views to further, and only desired to marshal an array of facts which might speak to us for themselves.

"It may be interesting to add that one hundred and twelve specimens were tested with heat and nitric acid, in perfectly clean test tubes, for albumen, and but *two* presented that ingredient. They were both primiparæ, and had their feet and eyelids a little puffy, but without any symptom leading them to apply for advice. They were both kept on the use of gentle saline cathartics. In one the albumen disappeared before confinement. The urine of the other was not again examined, but both had natural labours."

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